

theocratic forces in the nation “call the shots” and overrule “government decisions and ignoring advice.” According to the Times, Zarif says that the political wing is “severely constricted” and decisions “are dictated by the supreme leader or Revolutionary Guards Corps.” Obama’s contention that the Iran deal was being forged with the “moderate faction” was always a fantasy.

The real moderates in Iran were forsaken by Obama and Biden when they decided that the United States wouldn’t support the 2009 Green Movement, in what Soviet dissident Natan Sharansky called one of the biggest failures of human rights in modern history. Democrats Murphy, Biden, and Kerry are more interested in ensuring Iran becomes a regional counterforce to Israeli power.

Whatever you believe about the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or Biden’s iteration of the deal, it should not have to be said that high-ranking United States officials shouldn’t be sharing sensitive information about an ally with a terror regime. Yet it also seems quite likely that’s exactly what John Kerry did.

Mr. SULLIVAN. The beginning of this article says:

Let’s pause to reflect on how monumentally stunning it is that the former U.S. secretary of state allegedly tattled on Israel to Iran.

It goes on to say: A high-ranking American official would feel comfortable sharing this kind of classified information “with an autocratic adversary—a government that’s murdered hundreds of Americans, regularly kidnapped them, interfered with our elections, and propped up a regime that gasses its people—about the covert actions of a long-time critical American ally.”

What else did Kerry tell Zarif, this article asks? Press reports don’t say, but if this is true, if John Kerry told Iran—the leaders of Iran—about issues relating to our most critical ally in the region, Israel, which Iran has repeatedly said they want to wipe Israel off the face of the Earth, if he did this, he needs to resign. If he did this with the intent of undermining the current President of the United States at the time, President Trump, and the Members of this body, he needs to resign.

He is a member of the current administration’s National Security Council. It has become clear that our adversaries, whether Beijing or Iran, like it when John Kerry is in charge of foreign policy and national security. Why? Because they know how to use him to their advantage. And our allies fear him. Why? Because they know his judgment is off on so many issues. So, too, do America’s working families.

We need to look into this. If this is true—if this is true—I certainly hope other Members of this body, Democrats and Republicans, will join me in calling for the resignation of John Kerry. Enough is enough. The redline that was crossed, if this is true, revealing secret information to one of America’s most sworn enemies, with the blood of thousands of American military members on its hands, undermining the interests of one of our most important allies, the State of Israel, if this is true, John Kerry needs to go. He should resign or

he should get fired by the President of the United States.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

#### DEFENSE BUDGET

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, you know, there is a lot that we do not agree on here in the Senate, but I think everybody, including the Presiding Officer, can agree that we need to secure our country. We need to be safe. Our citizens need to feel safe. Our job as elected officials is to make sure that those who have stepped up to defend our country have the resources they need to do their job and do it safely.

The President’s recent budget proposal for the Defense Department does not, and I repeat, does not give our men and women in uniform the tools to do their job properly. It is clear that President Biden thinks we don’t need further investment in our military. It is clear he thinks it is OK to ask our men and women to do more with less, and that is impossible. This should alarm the Members of this body and all American people.

The world has changed a lot in 50 years. When President Biden first came to Washington in 1972, there were two superpowers: the United States and the Soviet Union. Back then, we spent 6.5 percent of our Federal budget on national defense—6.5. Today, we spend less than 3.5.

In 2021, we are facing different but very, very serious threats. Secretary Austin has said that China remains the top “pacing threat” for our military. It is much, much more than that. China isn’t just trying to dominate Asia and its neighbors; they are trying to dominate much of the world through its growing military and economic influence. Simply keeping pace with China is not enough.

We have got to outpace all of our adversaries, but doing that requires smart, substantial, and strategic investments in our military—much more investment than the President and many people here in Congress publicly propose.

Let me walk through some of the ways that a supposedly flat defense budget hurts our national security.

President Biden says he wants his administration to trust the experts on things like COVID, but this defense budget shows he doesn’t apply the same principle to the Pentagon. Unlike the President and some of my Democratic colleagues, I think we should take seriously the advice of our commanding generals, for they are the experts in this purview.

Here is what ADM Charles Richard, commander of U.S. Strategic Command, who is over our nuclear capabilities, said in last week’s hearing to the Senate Armed Services Committee:

I have what I need today to deter. . . . but I need it modernized. . . . There’s no remaining margin.

His warning is clear. We must modernize our greatest deterrent and keep

peace among our adversaries with our nuclear arsenal. That means updating all three legs of the nuclear triad: submarines, bombers, and intercontinental ballistic missiles. It is necessary to do so, and it is also possible. As former Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said, “America can afford survival.”

The Russians have made modernizing their nuclear arsenal a priority. The Chinese have made growing their nuclear stockpile a matter of national pride. But the United States? Each day we rely on nuclear weapons that, in many cases, were designed by an analog mechanical computer. The free world, meaning the United States, works and sleeps under a nuclear umbrella that hasn’t been updated to the digital age.

Meanwhile, the Chinese are fielding hypersonic missiles, which are missiles that go into space and then return to their target. Ours are still on the drawing board.

China’s arsenal of ground-based and medium-range missiles continues to grow. They are pointed right at our forces in the Pacific and our allies in the region. We need investment to maintain our missile defense systems so we can protect our people and deter the Chinese from attacking our allies.

We are also in a new space race, and it is a race we must win. Americans may not realize how much we rely on space for our daily lives. Our satellites allow us to get GPS for our phones or even watch football games on television, but the Chinese want to weaponize this new frontier of war, and we are falling way behind.

Right now, the Chinese have set up satellites over Taiwan as they continue to ramp up their threats on this democratic neighbor. It is unbelievable. I heard about the growing gap between us and the Chinese when I visited Army Materiel Command at Redstone Arsenal a few weeks ago in Huntsville. These folks shared with me how desperate we need to modernize our space-based systems that contribute to our missile defense.

The U.S. Army is the largest consumer of space products, and our military relies on Materiel Command to provide the resources to train our soldiers for research, development of new equipment, and defend our Nation. They should not have to beg the President of the United States for the money to invest in the capabilities that we need.

The United States must ensure secure and reliable access to space. Our budget needs to demonstrate commitment to defending our existing space assets and developing new technologies so we can win this next theater of conflict. We also need to invest in the safety of our service men and women, especially in aviation. Currently, the average age of an airplane in our military is older than the pilots flying them—older.

According to a recent report by the National Commission on Military

Aviation Safety, the military had more than 6,000 noncombat aviation accidents since 2013, destroying 157 aircraft, at a cost of \$9.41 billion. Even worse was the human cost. There are 198 souls that have been lost in these tragic accidents, affecting hundreds more spouses, children, family, and friends.

When asked why these causes occurred, servicemembers pointed to inadequate training programs, risky maintenance practices, and spotty funding, among other reasons. Alabama is home to Fort Rucker, where every Army helicopter pilot comes to get their training. When I visited the folks at Fort Rucker, they told me about the very real need for increased flight training hours for our pilots, which requires more investment and prioritization in the defense budget.

This last week, two pilots were injured in a helicopter crash at Fort Rucker during flight training. I am sure General Francis and the U.S. Army safety center will do a thorough investigation and provide feedback on the improvements needed to ensure that this does not happen again. The safety of our flight program must be a top priority. We must listen to our men and women in uniform and invest in the proper training and safety measures that will prevent these crashes.

Alabama stands ready to continue to build our military so we can maintain our status as a preeminent fighting force in the world. We have got hundreds of contractors and more than 200,000 employed in the defense sector across the State of Alabama. These topnotch men and women support our military installations from shipbuilders in Mobile to Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, and many places in between. As Winston Churchill said, "Give us the tools, and we will finish the job."

We are willing and able, but those tools require sustained funding from the Federal Government. Telling our forces to fight a war with outdated tools is like giving a football team some leather helmets and decades-old poorly fitted pads and expecting them to compete against modern equipment. But that is exactly what President Biden's defense budget is asking our military to do. Frankly, it is a huge disappointment, coming from our Commander in Chief. We cannot let our men and women down.

Thankfully, it is Congress—not the President—which has the power of the purse. And, really, this should be our first order of business every year. It is that important.

In the coming weeks, I will be working with my colleagues on the National Defense Authorization Act and budget that will enable our military to do the job better today and prepare for all the challenges tomorrow. This debate is ultimately about whether or not we have the willpower to fight to defend our way of life and our great country.

Well, I am willing to keep fighting for the United States by investing in

the men and women who keep us safe. I urge my colleagues and President Biden to do the same.

REMEMBERING CURTIS T. SPROUSE

Madam President, finally, I want to take a moment to honor the life of a great person in Alabama, a war veteran—Curtis T. Sprouse.

Mr. Sprouse joined the U.S. Army in 1943 at the age of 17. He served in the 318th Infantry Regiment under General George Patton in the European theater, including the Battle of the Bulge. For his bravery, he earned the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, and Good Conduct Medal, among other honors.

He passed away in Dothan, AL, last week at the age of 98.

A year ago, I visited with Mr. Sprouse at a restaurant in Dothan, and we sat at a table known locally as the "table of knowledge." It is where locals have sat and talked for decades, where people are said to solve the world's problems with conversation. That day, Mr. Sprouse and I talked about his service, and I talked to him about my father's time, who at the same age today would be 98. We talked about World War II. We didn't end up solving the world's problems, but we did talk about how to humbly, graciously, and patriotically serve our great country.

Mr. Sprouse was a humble man, but it was men like him who defended our country and the world from evil. And, ultimately, they prevailed. We owe Mr. Sprouse a debt of gratitude we can never fully repay.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary work of the teachers in Arkansas and across the country.

As we prepare to celebrate Teacher Appreciation Week, it is clear that educators are in a class by themselves when it comes to resilience. Over the last 12 months, they have shown us what it means to be selfless and brave at a time when both were critically necessary.

I am especially proud of teachers in Arkansas who rose to the challenge of leading classes 100 percent virtually for the first time and then embraced reopening our schools in August 2020. The sudden transition to virtual learning was an extraordinary hurdle, as educators had to learn new technology and new teaching techniques overnight.

For all of us who have learned to use Zoom, it is worth taking a moment to imagine an online classroom with 30 wiggling first graders who want to show you their pets, or that you are teaching calculus to high school students who are preparing for an AP exam while attending class from their car at a Wi-Fi hotspot. Somehow, with great creativity and dedication, teachers embraced this mission and continued to do everything they could to reach each child.

When Arkansas schools reopened in the fall, they were faced with a tremen-

dous new challenge, from masks and social distancing to teaching classes, where some students were at their desks and others were on the screen. Arkansas teachers, once again, did the impossible for their students.

Over the last year, I have heard from educators who worried for their own health and safety but said their dedication to their students was stronger than fear. They learned new skills literally overnight, overhauled the curriculum, and reimagined every aspect of their classroom to comply with COVID-19 guidelines. Somehow, they also made our kids feel safe—safe enough to learn, set an example with their positive attitudes, and let students know how important they were, whether in the classroom or on a computer screen.

As they worked to maintain the academic progress of each child, they also provided a lifeline in an otherwise chaotic time. It is amazing to see the smiles on faces of the kids when they see their teachers. Even though nothing was normal, they gave students an escape back to normalcy by being there and continuing to do what they do best—teach.

When we look back at the heroes of this tumultuous time, it is clear that teachers will be among those we honor as society's most valuable players.

On behalf of the people of Arkansas, I want to thank our teachers for the great work that they have done this year and every year to bring out the best in each child and pave the way to a brighter future.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FOR THE PEOPLE ACT OF 2021

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, we are less than 100 days into the Biden administration, and already we can identify a pattern in how they are building their policy initiatives, interacting with Congress, and marketing their ideas to the American people. In every example, the governing rule can be boiled down to "what you see isn't what you are going to get."

So far, in this 117th Congress, every single major policy proposal that DC Democrats have forced into the spotlight has been based on a false premise. They have intentionally misled the American people and are now catering to the increasingly radical leftwing that gets further out of step with the rest of this country each and every passing day.

Consider last month's absurd \$1.9 trillion spending package. The Democrats billed this as "the American Rescue Plan" and "COVID relief," but only 9 percent—9 percent—of the total package pricetag went for testing, vaccinations, and healthcare jobs. The rest